

PRESS RELEASE



The Cleveland Museum of Art

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THE IMPRESSIONIST AESTHETIC
August 10 - October 31, 1982

Between 1860 and 1920, many French and American artists sought to depict the fleeting moments of everyday life, experimenting with composition, color, and the play of light on the surface of objects at different times of day. The ways in which these artists captured in drawings and prints their momentary impressions of landscape, people, and scenes from contemporary life is the subject of The Impressionist Aesthetic, an exhibition on view at The Cleveland Museum of Art through October 31, 1982. Drawn from the collection of The Cleveland Museum of Art, the exhibition consists of more than 100 prints and drawings by seventeen artists, including Mary Cassatt, Edgar Degas, Childe Hassam, Edouard Manet, Camille Pissarro, Auguste Renoir, and James McNeill Whistler.

This exhibition presents some of the finest prints produced by the Impressionists, at the same time providing an excellent survey of their subjects and techniques. While Camille Pissarro often drew peasants in the countryside, Edouard Manet took his themes from city life, the theater, literature, and Spanish culture. Mary Cassatt and Auguste Renoir produced intimate and charming portraits of women and children. Edgar Degas, interested in how the body moves, rendered figures --often dancers and nude women bathing--in awkward poses, frozen in a moment of suspended action. Their compositions were informal and inventive and frequently inspired by contemporary photographs and the design of Japanese prints.

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2-the impressionist aesthetic

Most of the major Impressionist painters were interested in printmaking, but as a private, rather than a commercial endeavor. They usually printed only a limited number of impressions which they circulated among their friends. Many of them experimented with a variety of techniques--etching, drypoint, aquatint, and lithography--sometimes combining several processes in a single print. Auguste Renoir would repeat the same motif in different media to obtain a particular tonal value or effect of modelling. Félix Buhot, in scenes of rain-swept streets and beaches, and James McNeill Whistler, in his views of Venetian lagoons, used plate tone--a small amount of ink left on the printing plate--to produce the effect of moisture-laden atmosphere. Mary Cassatt printed soft ground etchings and aquatints in color, changing the colors slightly so that each impression is unique.

The Impressionist Aesthetic was organized by Jane Glaubinger, assistant curator of prints and drawings at The Cleveland Museum of Art, and is installed in the Museum's prints and drawings galleries.

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For additional information or photographs, please contact the Public Relations Office, The Cleveland Museum of Art, 11150 East Boulevard, Cleveland, Ohio 44106; 216/421-7340.